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RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0812
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA PRIORITY 3011
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1453
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2332
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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TAGS: [PTER](#) [MARR](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: NEPAL: VIEW OF TWO MAOIST CANTONMENTS

Classified By: CDA Nicholas J. Dean. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Emboff Travels Near Two Maoist Cantonment Sites

¶1. (C) During a driving tour of western Nepal from December 14-25, 2006, Emboff had the opportunity to get a glimpse of two Maoist People's Liberation Army cantonment sites. The first, on December 22, 2006, was a main cantonment site, situated on the north side of the Mahendra Highway, a few kilometers west of the Karnali River. The second, on December 25, 2006, was a satellite camp, situated east of the road connecting Atariya and Dadeldhura, near the village of Sahajpur.

Main Camp: Organized But Ragtag

¶2. (C) In the first camp, near Masuriya, the Maoists had a clearly defined perimeter, marked with downed trees and bramble bushes, but no perimeter fencing. There were combatants, mostly young women, with Indian Small Arms System (INSAS) rifles providing perimeter security to the camp. These guards were located in raised bunkers surrounded by sandbags. There were three bunkers across the front of the camp near the highway, with two guards in each bunker. The camp itself, at least the area visible to Emboff from the highway, was a group of makeshift huts made of wood or bamboo poles covered with plastic or straw for protection from the elements. When Emboff passed by, it was late evening, and the combatants were standing in formation. The combatants themselves were a relatively ragtag group of individuals, some in uniform and others in T-shirts and ratty pants. None carried weapons at the time. The camp seemed well-organized, but was definitely still under construction. People were freely walking in and out of the camp. The site was located about a ten-minute drive east of an Armed Police Force headquarters, also on the same highway.

Satellite Camp: Lacking Resources

¶3. (C) The second camp, a satellite camp near Sahajpur, had no clearly defined perimeter that Emboff could see. Emboff observed the camp from a distance of about half a kilometer across a valley from the main road. The camp consisted of

small huts and tents made mostly from blue canvas tarpaulins.

It was early in the morning and smoke was rising from many of the huts. Villagers in the towns along the main road told Emboff that many of the Maoist combatants were still compelling the villagers to provide food and shelter until the government provided them with more resources. The camp itself was located on an easily defensible hilltop, with views all around, in very rugged terrain, and was serviced, according to a local police source, by a small dirt road. There were two-to-three small tents on two of the surrounding hills as well, presumably for lookout/defensive positions. None of the combatants from this camp were visible to Emboff.

Comment

¶4. (C) The camps lived up to their reputation of being a mess, with minimal provisions, although the main cantonment site in Masuriya appeared relatively well-organized. It is clear that there is a long way to go to improve the living standards in the camps so that the Maoist cadre will want to stay there.

DEAN